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UNCLAS TEGUCIGALPA 001987

SIPDIS

STATE FOR WHA/PPC, WHA/CEN, WHA/USOAS, AND DRL/PHD
STATE PASS AID FOR LAC/CAM AND DCHA/DG

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [FAID](#) [PREL](#) [KDEM](#) [HO](#)

SUBJECT: USAID Assistance to Honduran Elections: Primary
Assistance Successful; General Elections Funding Pending

REF: Tegucigalpa 1643

[¶11.](#) This is an action request for WHA/PCC. Please see para.

[¶16.](#)

[¶12.](#) During the February 2005 Honduran primaries, USAID provided more than \$1.4 million in funding, which supported:
- \$65,000 (DCHA) for technical assistance to the Honduran Supreme Electoral Tribunal (TSE) to provide election experts to help the commission develop its strategic approaches to implementing the new law.
- \$216,000 (local currency trust fund) to provide advisory assistance to (a) the GOH and NGOs in the development of a national voter education program and (b) the TSE in implementing the elections in accordance with the new law.
- \$130,000 (ESF) to support an election assistance program centered on a civic education campaign (media and leaflets) and to promote dialogues on the role of civil society and the importance of political parties for democracy in Honduras.
- \$1 million (local currency funds) to the TSE in support of goods and services to support the electoral process and training to strengthen regional and local electoral bodies and basic poll worker skills training activities derived from the elections experts recommendations in the first item above.

[¶13.](#) Of the \$245,000 remaining from assistance to the primaries, USAID will be supporting the training of trainers for poll worker training activities. These trained poll workers will be stationed throughout the country.

[¶14.](#) The Embassy, led by USAID, has requested \$1.6 million in funding to support the following initiatives for the November 27 national elections (reftel):

- Voter education will be accomplished through 70 NGOs throughout the country under the guidance and leadership of the NGO Federation of Private Organizations in Honduras (FOPRIDEH), as was done in the primaries of February 2005. This exercise is currently on hold and is critical to educate the Honduran public on the new electoral process since the congressional elections will follow a different format (proportional) from that of the primaries (majority), and for the survival of the smaller parties. Post saw tremendous impact from an effective civic education campaign carried out through the media. Proposed activities with these organizations will develop and deliver training and educational materials. (\$500,000)
- Past experience has identified the need for greater domestic monitoring, given the increased likelihood of fraud in a presidential election. USAID plans to provide funding to train and field 10,000 domestic observers in order to cover all polling stations nationwide. (\$450,000)
- Additional poll worker training will be critical for ensuring credibility and transparency of the process. The effort will require selection and training of approximately 260,000 poll workers in 18 departmental (provincial) electoral tribunals, 298 municipal electoral tribunals, and serve as members of the 18,368 polling stations throughout the country. (\$650,000)
- The continued role of an international elections advisor will be critical, as it was during the primary elections, in order to promote sound and transparent decisions by the TSE. USAID will utilize the same advisor to continue this effective and influential impact on the TSE. (\$123,000). (Note: USAID/DCHA has agreed to provide funding to cover the costs of both an elections advisor and an election information systems integrity consultant. End Note.)

[¶15.](#) The fundamental premise is that everything is significantly behind schedule. Backtracking from November 27 to today gives Post, in coordination with FOPRIDEH and the TSE, only approximately eight weeks to implement and coordinate a comprehensive media, voter education, and coordinated training exercise schedule throughout the country. FOPRIDEH is waiting to act on critical activities with support from the Center for Electoral Promotion and Assistance (CAPEL). Training exercises for 10,000 domestic observers and 260,000 poll workers need to be implemented in October. The same must be done for voter education materials and media campaigns on the new electoral process.

[¶16.](#) Action request for WHA/PPC: Post again requests WHA/PPC

consideration of the request for ESF for election assistance.

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